

RNID Grant Review Panels: Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy

All members of an RNID grant review panel must actively adhere to and support this code of conduct for conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

Conflicts of interest

1. The RNID Research team will ask all panel members to identify all potential conflicts of interest prior to allocation of applications to panel members (at either preliminary or full application stage, depending on the scheme).
2. Following the application deadline, the RNID Research team will send all panel members a list of all applications, applicants and their institutions, and ask panel members to identify any conflicts they have with each application.
3. Panel members must disclose any conflicts of interest by the requested deadline (usually two weeks after being sent the list). They must, in all cases, disclose them before the assessment stage begins.
4. If a panel member is unsure whether they have a conflict of interest with an application, they should contact the RNID Research team as soon as possible to discuss it.
5. Any declaration of interest in a grant application by a panel member shall be recorded in the minutes of the relevant panel meeting or assessment summary.
6. Where a conflict of interest exists, the panel member will not have access to any of the documentation for that application, nor will they be permitted to participate in the discussion, scoring or final outcome of the application. The panel member will be required to leave the panel meeting, if relevant, while discussion and scoring takes place.
7. If the chair of a panel has a conflict with an application, they will stay in the meeting to run the discussion and scoring of the application, but will not take part in the discussion themselves, or provide a score for the application.

Panel members as applicants

8. Panel members (except for the chair of a panel) are welcome to submit an application to the scheme of which they are a panel member. They will be permitted to take part in any preliminary assessment stage. However, they will

not be able to take part in the final panel assessment for the scheme if they submit a full application (either by invitation or open submission). This includes if they are named as a co-applicant on an application.

9. If a panel member is named as a collaborator on an application to the scheme of which they are a panel member, this will be treated as a standard conflict of interest (see point 6).
10. All panel members are free to submit an application to any RNID scheme where they are not on the panel.

Definition of a Conflict of Interest

11. RNID considers a conflict of interest to arise under the following circumstances:
 - a. If a panel member is named on a grant application as an applicant or co-applicant (see point 8).
 - b. If a panel member is named on a grant application as a collaborator (see point 9).
 - c. If a panel member has a recent collaboration with any applicant named on an application (excluding collaborators). A recent collaboration is defined as an active funded grant, joint publication or other active working collaboration during the previous 3 years. Co-authorship on publications resulting from a large consortium (more than 20 authors) will not be considered as a conflict of interest as collaboration between the two parties is considered to be minimal unless specified otherwise by the panel member.
 - d. If a panel member has a personal relationship with any of the named parties on a grant application, such as spouse, family member or close friendship.
 - e. If a panel member was the PhD supervisor or PhD student of any applicant named on an application.
 - f. If a panel member is at the same research institute as the lead applicant(s) or co-applicants of the grant application.
 - g. If a panel member could personally gain (financially or otherwise) in relation to an application under consideration.
 - h. If a panel member is at the same research institute as a collaborator on the grant application, it is not considered to be a significant conflict of interest. However, we will take into consideration individual cases if raised with us by a panel member.
12. Please note that RNID may consider relaxing certain conflicts of interest (11c. or 11f. only and only if the nature of the conflict allows it) if the fair assessment of an application is jeopardised by a significantly reduced number of members involved in the discussion.

Confidentiality

13. Panel members agree not to disclose any confidential information with any third parties. Confidential information may include (but is not limited to) information provided in research grant applications, panel funding recommendations, information provided by peer reviewers and any discussions about RNID's funding decisions.
14. Any materials provided by RNID (including electronic copies) are done so in confidence and must be appropriately destroyed or deleted after the corresponding meeting or when the materials are no longer required.
15. RNID should be notified of any breach of confidentiality as soon as possible.

Agreement

I understand and hereby agree to adhere to the above policy as a member of one of RNID's Research Grant Review Panels. I shall raise any potential conflicts of interest with the Research team at RNID in advance of any meeting, and any confidential or sensitive information I am privy to through my involvement with an RNID panel shall be treated confidentially and not discussed with non-panel members or panel members who are not privy to the same information.

Full name:

Signed:

Date: